

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 197919
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 197919

NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR AMB YOUNG

FOL RPT PARIS 24062 ACTION SECSTATE 19 AUG 77 QUOTE

S E C R E T PARIS 24062

NODIS

CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1-2-3

TAGS: PARM, SF

SUBJ: POSSIBLE SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM

REFS: A. STATE 197389. B. PRETORIA 4211 REPEATED

PARIS AS STATE 196791. C. STATE 197411. D. STATE

196580.

1. ON AUGUST 19, I CARRIED OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS IN
REFTEL A WITH SOUTOU AND PROVIDED HIM A COPY OF THE
TEXT OF THE SECRETARY'S LETTER TO BOTHA. I TOOK CARE

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TO ASSURE THAT SOUTOU UNDERSTOOD THE REASONS FOR OUR
DECISION TO ACT IMMEDIATELY. I ALSO INFORMED HIM OF
THE INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO USUN (REFTEL C) REGARDING
CONTINGENCY TALKS FOR POSSIBLE SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION
AND THE PRESS GUIDANCE FURNISHED TO OUR AFRICAN POSTS
(REFTEL D).

2. SOUTOU TOOK CAREFUL NOTE AND SAID THAT HE WOULD REPORT BOTH TO PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND TO GUIRINGAUD WHO IS DUE BACK FROM AFRICA AT 10:00 P.M. THIS EVENING. SOUTOU SAID HE WOULD ALSO WIRE THE FRENCH PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN NEW YORK ABOUT THE SECURITY COUNCIL ASPECT.

3. THUS FAR PARIS HAS NO WORD ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN REACTION TO THE FRENCH DEMARCHE. SOUTOU SAID THAT ONLY GISCARD CAN DECIDE THE FRENCH RESPONSE TO OUR INVITATION THAT THEY BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST FOR IMMEDIATE ON-SITE-INSPECTION. SOUTOU INTENDS TO TELL GISCARD THAT THE INITIAL SOUTH AFRICAN REACTION TO THE US DEMARCHE IS NOT SURPRISING AND THAT, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, HE (SOUTOU) BELIEVES THE US NOW HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO PUSH THE INSPECTION ISSUE. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WOULD ADVISE GISCARD THAT EVEN IF FRANCE SHOULD GO ALONG WITH THE PRINCIPLE INVOLVED (WHICH IS UNLIKELY), IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO TRY TO JOIN THE US INSPECTION TEAM. THIS WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE MATTERS AND MAKE SOUTH AFRICAN ACCEPTANCE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. IN SOUTH AFRICAN EYES, TWO WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD BE RAISING SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA'S SOVEREIGNTY.

4. SOUTOU'S FURTHER COMMENTS MADE CLEAR THAT HE
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REMAINS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT TRYING TO LIMIT SOVIET EXPLOITATION OF THIS ISSUE. HE SAID DE GUIRINGAUD'S RECEPTION IN MOZAMBIQUE AND IN TANZANIA WILL HAVE DRIVEN HOME JUST HOW SENSITIVE BLACK AFRICAN OPINION IS ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE. THUS, MOSCOW HAS A FERTILE FIELD. IF THE ELYSEE AGREES, SOUTOU PROPOSES TO INFORM THE SOVIETS OF THE FRENCH DEMARCHE TO SOUTH AFRICA.

5. THE FRENCH CHARGE IN MOSCOW HAS DELIVERED A
A

PROTEST TO THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY (THE DIRECTOR OF THE FIRST AFRICAN SECTION) REGARDING TASS CHARGES OF FRENCH COMPLICITY IN SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT. THE SOVIETS REPLIED THAT THE USSR IS GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION; THAT IT IS DETERMINED TO FIGHT AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR DEVICE "BY ALL MEANS"; AND THAT THE ISSUE WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING THE UNGA.

6. SOUTOU ALSO REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT NEXT STEPS DEPENDING ON THE VARIOUS CONTINGENCIES. FOR EXAMPLE,

IF SOUTH AFRICA REFUSES INSPECTION, WHERE DO WE GO
FROM THERE WITH THE RUSSIANS--NOT TO MENTION WITH THE
AFRICANS? IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, SOUTH AFRICA ACCEPTS
INSPECTION AND THE RESULTS ARE REASSURING, WON'T THE
SOVIETS REFUSE TO BELIEVE THE RESULTS (OR PRETEND DIS-
BELIEF)? I RESPONDED THAT, IF THE SOUTH AFRICANS
SHOULD ACCEPT INSPECTION AND OUR PEOPLE WERE CONVINCED
THE INSTALLATION IS CLEAN, WE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO PROVE
THAT FACT, NOT ONLY TO THE RUSSIANS, BUT TO WORLD
OPINION AT LARGE.

HARTMAN

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